

YLEM

Artists Using Science and Technology

NEWSLETTER

PO Box 749, Orinda CA 94563

Ylem (Eye-lum): The primordial stuff out of which the universe emerged in the Big Bang.

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Ylem Forum: Ylem Shows Off!

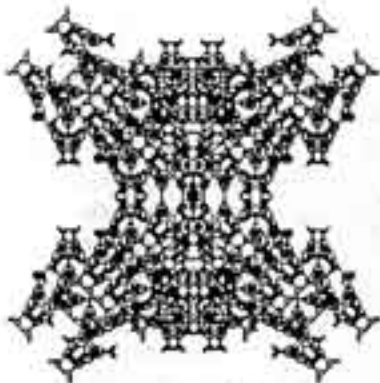
Vol 10 & Sept

Wednesday, Sept. 19, 8-10 pm

Lobby of the Exploratorium, 3601 Lyon St., San Francisco

Museum admission: \$3 adults, \$1.50 children, Forum is free

Meet seven artists whose works are interactive. Lucia Grossberger's "Talking Pictures" make noises at you. Holograms from the Holography Institute change perspective as you walk by. Your movements create patterns and become part of a game in "Life on a Slice," an Amiga work by Marjorie Franklin, and Bev & Hans Reiser. See Eleanor Kent's knitted fractal works. John Stokes will demonstrate his new software, "Expansions," for generating patterns. Choose 44 different endings in Mike Mosher's Hypercard novella based on Huckelberry Finn. The hand-painted geometry of Jonathan Quintin metamorphoses as you select different colors of light. The museum is open, and all exhibits are running.



Patterns by John Stokes's "Expansions" software. See also top borders of pages.

Mark Your Calendar!

8th annual Ylem Computer Graphics Tour

Saturday, November 10, 2-5 pm

Western Imaging, specialists in customizing Targa workstations, welcomes us to their new and larger headquarters at 115 Constitution in Menlo Park. We'll investigate the latest in PC-based hardware, 2-D and 3-D graphics software, and interactive multimedia. Space is limited. At this early date, best to RSVP by mail, drop a card to Trudy Myrth Reagan, address below (This is in lieu of a forum in November).

Readers: Do you have portable handson works you would like to display for the evening? The new-style Ylem forum may be an opportunity for you and your public. Next forum will be in late January. Contact Trudy Myrth Reagan, 967 Moreno, Palo Alto, CA 94303; (415) 856-9593.



Computer art by Diane Fenster

The Cyborganic Paradigm: a Manifesto

by Vernon Reed

Cyborg-n., from cybernetic organism, a hypothetical human being utilizing machine replacements for some organs and body parts.

As the computer revolution approaches the half-century mark, it is time to reassess our relationship to this all-transforming and possibly liberating technology. Until now, the "intelligence" (I use that word in a sort of generic sense, not necessarily Artificial Intelligence) embodied in computer systems has been perceived as profoundly other, even though at this stage it has no qualities that do more than simply reflect our own mental structures. Computers do not to any great extent program themselves, although that is sure to change. We consider them merely slave or servant, simply a means to an end. I am proposing a new perception of the computer as a partner and coevolving participant in our destiny.

In order to fully exploit the growing power and shrinking size of computers, it will be necessary to get really intimate with them — even to the point of interfacing them physically and neurologically with our bodies. This a scenario often played out in science fiction, but I have little interest in fiction. We can make reality just as strange and wonderful by the application of free-ranging creative thought, backed with ever greater levels of technological expertise. This kind of link-up is already happening in a number of situations, the classic one being the fighter pilot with his eye-trackers, head-up displays and virtual controls. Such a person is already part computer, though without any physical implant stage (at least not yet).

Why would anyone want to be part computer? To realize the age-old dream of extending our personalities and bodies as far as we can, to apprehend new vistas beyond our conventional senses and processing power, free of the physical limitations imposed by our carbon-based origins. We are not the end product of evolution — indeed it is

an ongoing process — and I believe that the next phase of evolution for our species will be at least partially based on silicon, gallium arsenide, or similar substances, not solely on carbon compounds as before.

This is not idle speculation: there are robotics researchers who are right now trying to find ways to replace human processing power, bit by bit, with semiconductor processors. Such a person would become essentially immortal (as long as the electric bill got paid). It is really not a matter of whether this will happen, but when it will happen, and whether it will serve to



"Twin Paradox Meltdown," animated pendant for cybernetic necklace by Vernon Reed

further our humanness or subvert it. We need to confront the issue now, so we will be able to influence events in a way to encourage maximum benefit from such man/machine symbiosis.

This has many aspects. I will choose to limit my observations to artmaking, and in particular wearable art making, because, in fact, it is my role as a jewelry artist that suggested it to me. I make jewelry objects which contain on-board microcomputers, running stored programs which generate moving patterns in LCD panels of my own design and manufacture. So what we have here is people wearing computer systems, a situation virtually unthinkable in the earliest stages of the development of computers, and one with exciting possibilities for the coevolution of humans and computing machinery. The real action takes place in the software which runs on the machine. In the common usage, however, "computer" is employed to indicate both the machine

and the programs running on it, and I will continue that usage here.

Computers evolve toward ever greater power in constantly shrinking packages, and this plays beautifully into the hands of those artists working with body art. Cybernetic jewelry originated as separate and contained objects which would live in close association on, but distinct from, the wearer's body. I envision a path of ornament evolution which will result in a hybrid organism, with semiconductor and carbon-based circuit interfaces at a really deep neurologic level of integration. This same coevolution will develop for other, more "practical" purposes, but ornament has an powerful role to play in our cybernetic future, so let's speculate.

The first stage of cyborganic ornament involves the simple monitoring of bioelectric signals to feed into input ports in the jewel's computer. These signals will alter the execution of code in a way that will produce changes in some kind of visual and/or aural output device, making the wearer's internal state, in some vague sense, apprehensible to an outside viewer. Of course, we will not know in the near-term nearly enough about bioelectric body fields to assign to these changes any sort of concrete meaning. Nevertheless, I assert that such output can be esthetically valid, as an on-going code breaking performance.

The next stage of evolution involves feedback from the ornament computer into the wearer's nervous system, and will probably require invasive techniques in later stages of development. In the beginning, it may suffice to send such feedback through normal sense channels, using such transmitters as flashing lights and pulsing sounds. This technology already exists in brain-wave synchronizers, and can possibly be refined by using infrared LED lights and micro hearing-aid technology, in order to render the feedback devices less obvious. It is important to note that all the concepts I am presenting are developed in terms of fully functional ornament, meaning that it is not funky or

A Phantasmagorical Model of Light and Music

kluged on any level at which it operates, including the most basic visual one.

For this feedback level to reach its real potential, however, I think it will be necessary to have a "jack" into the nervous system, which will act as a high-speed computer bus for information passing between the ornament computer and the wearer's brain. This sort of thing is not going to happen overnight, as there is no reason to have a bus into the central nervous system (CNS) when we cannot even make sense of the fields found there. But we will make sense of those myriad fields. Then there will be a reason to feed large amounts of information into the CNS at a high data rate. At such time I want those of us creating advanced ornament systems to be able to take advantage of these capabilities.

To do what? I see bionic ornament evolving into a cybernetic buffer for interacting with the complex information environment that will surely be present in the future. In addition to the myriad information exchanges required in day to day ordinary reality, there will be an entire overlay of virtual reality [cyberspace] to deal with, with even more strenuous processing requirements. Suitably evolved ornament can interface and filter this information hum, much as the "pilot's assistant" does for today's overtaxed fighter pilots, and will begin to take on the character of an alter ego, one to which the wearer can delegate tasks requiring sensory or processing modes not available in one's carbon-based body. This ornament will be, by definition, very personal, and will grow in capability as technologies advance and as the human and computer partners learn to work together.

This symbiotic enfoldment of carbon and semiconductor life will be the most important avenue for the continued evolution of intelligence in this corner of the galaxy. I believe that artists can play an important role to make this happen in a way which will enlarge and enrich our humanness, even as we become the cyborgs of Planet Earth. ❧



diagram and painting, "Chopin's Prelude #18," by Anton Lechleiter

by Anton Lechleiter

"Where science and beauty meet there is art." In his book, *The Art of Color*, Johannes Itten continues: "The primeval essence of color is a phantasmagorical resonance: light becomes music."

According to Webster, phantasmagoricals "a constantly shifting complex succession of things seen or imagined." This explanation leaves me wondering if we, at last, have a proper definition of a weather report!

Colors are Musical Voices, "Instruments" in Vision

Color tones create music the way instrumental tones create music. We too are a medley and everything else is also an infinite number of sets of arrangements of harmonies and melodies. With that in mind my work the last five years has been to find universal symbols and a common format for their notation with useful applications for artists interested in a marriage of light and sound.

There are aspects of sensation that are not in my model. Neither largeness in vision and loudness in hearing nor, edges and shapes in hearing and sight are included. Brightness of sound also must not be misunderstood as loudness when examining the model.

The model converts the brilliance of a specific musical pitch to a value level of light and converts the timbre of a musical instrument to a level of purity found in a specific visual color tone. The phantasmagorical model is a map. The map is not physically correct but it depicts territory. The map allows musical terms to be applied to visual circumstances. The model supports this contention often heard: "all art aspires to the condition of music." ❧

Ylem Calendar

Aug. 19, 2-7 pm

Geometric Puzzle Party

Invited are artists, mathematicians, teachers, and playful minds. Bring food, puzzles, art to share. Geometric models, polyhedral puzzles, visual delights in a unique setting! **George Coates Performance Space, 110 McAllister, San Francisco; RSVP needed: Stan Isaacs, (415) 858-2568.**

Aug. 20, 7:30 pm

Seeds of Cacophony

Everyone is welcome at the monthly cacophony society "meeting" where we cultivate new event ideas and savor the garden of events past. Look for the table with the most fruit. **Sacred Grounds CoffeeShop, 2095 Hayes at Cole, San Francisco.**

Aug 25, 7:00 pm

Improv Reality

If you don't like reality, create some of your own. We'll take to the streets to stage improvised skits, plays and fake interactions, and see how folks react. Would tourists give money to six folks carrying an apparently dead body and asking for spare change to buy a coffin? The possibilities, as they say, are limitless. **Sacred Grounds CoffeeShop, 2095 Hayes at Cole, San Francisco. Info: Jeffrey Spaulding (415) 564-5047**

Labor day weekend, September 1-3

Zone Trip #4- Ascent into the Black Rock Desert

Cacophony and company has discovered a point where the very nature of reality begins to change. We shall travel to a vast, desolate, white expanse stretching onward to the horizon in all directions. We will be accompanied by the Burning Man. This 40 foot tall wooden icon will travel with us to that unknown location in the desert and there, will meet with destiny surrounded by throngs of Cacophonists and Burning Man enthusiasts. We will be camping in the high desert for 3-4 days. It's a 7 hour drive from S.F. to the Zone. You must RSVP by phone with your name, address, and phone number. You will receive explicit info on what you will need to bring. Ride sharing will be available. **Somewhere in Nevada. Info: (415) 665-0351.**

All events are in San Francisco Bay Area unless otherwise specified

Some calendar items are from *Art Calendar*, *Rough Draft* and *FineArts Forum* e-mail.

Computer art by Nancy Jackson Freeman

Sept. 6-9

Cyber Arts International

Performances include one by The MIT Media Lab Hyperinstrument ensemble together with the California E.A.R. Ensemble, with animation by Kawaguchi. Conference speakers include Ted Nelson, Jaron Lanier, Myron Krueger & Tod Machover. Also, workshops, product demonstrations, interactive electronic galleries, performances. Info: **Cyber Arts International, 500 Howard St., San Francisco CA 94105; (415) 995-2471; FAX (415) 995-2494.**

Premier Event, September 7, 1990

Symposium, September 8-16, 1990

Infinite Illusions (Washington, D.C.)

The World of Electronically Created Imagery — A Comprehensive Computer Graphics Symposium
Presented by The Resident Associate Program The Smithsonian Institution. \$1,170. Info: **Registration Office, Resident Associate Program, Smithsonian Institution, Department 0603, Washington, DC 20073-0603 or FAX to (202) 786-2536 (credit card payment only).**

Sept. 8-14

Ars Electronica (Linz, Austria)

A series of Symposia, exhibits, performances, and concerts (including Computerized New Rock Music) focused on virtual reality. Festival pass AS 450.-, ticket AS 100.-. Info: **Ars Electronica, Brucknerhaus Linz, Untere Donaulände 7, Post fach 57, A-4010 Linz, Austria.**

Special Workshops, Sept. 8, 9, 12

Conference Sept 9-10

Northwest Computer Graphics Conference (Portland, OR)

Speakers: Carl Machover, Tom Linehan, Aaron Marcus, Ken O'Connell, Richard Wanderman,

rehabilitation consultant, will teach two HyperCard workshops. Two Visual Thinking workshops. Conference Fee: \$148. Info: **NCGC, Continuing Education, Continuation Center, 1553 Moss St., Eugene, OR 97403-1942; (503) 346-3537; Fax (503) 346-3509; tickets, 1-800-824-2714.**

Sept 9-Oct. 10, 1990

New Media: Visual Education in Electronic Culture (Wrockaw, Poland)

By the Polish Association for Plastic Arts. Cost of accommodation and board covered by the organisers. Info: **Janusz Grzonkowsky, PWSSP, 50-156 Wrockaw, Plac Polski 3/4, Poland.**

October 1990.

Arttransition '90 (Cambridge, MA)

An Art, Science and Technology Conference. MIT Center for Advanced Visual Studies. Will focus on the 150 or so new art and technology Centers and Media Departments around the world; provide a forum for sharing ideas; curricula and plans for international collaboration. **Contact CAVS, 40 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139.**

November 12-17

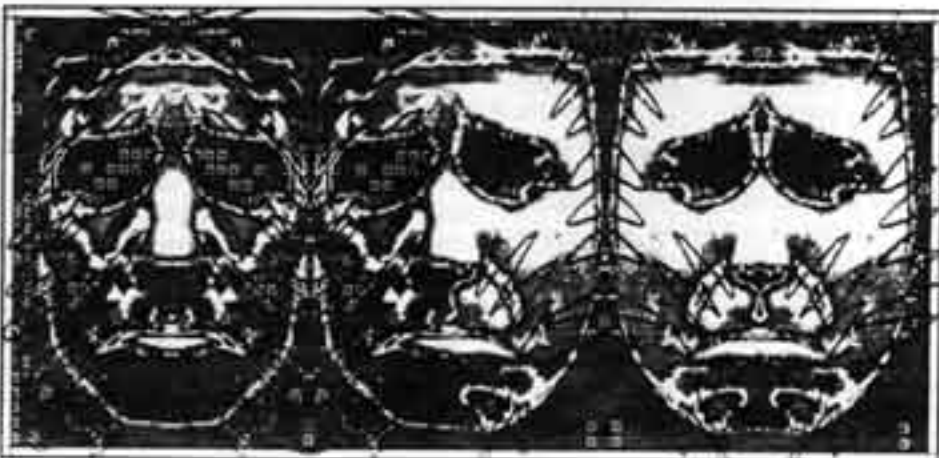
SISEA (Groningen, Holland)

Second International Symposium on Electronic Art: Computer Graphics, Computer Animation and Simulation, Computer Music, ...and much more. Info: **SISEA, Westerhavenstraat 139718 AJ Groningen, The Netherlands.**

Nov. 19-21

Image'Com 90 (Bordeaux, France)

International conference on image media. Fee before Oct. 15: 3,900 Francs; later, 4,400 F. Info: **Secrétariat du Colloque, ADERA, B.P. 48, 33166 Saint-Médard-en-Jalles, Cedex, France.**



ART

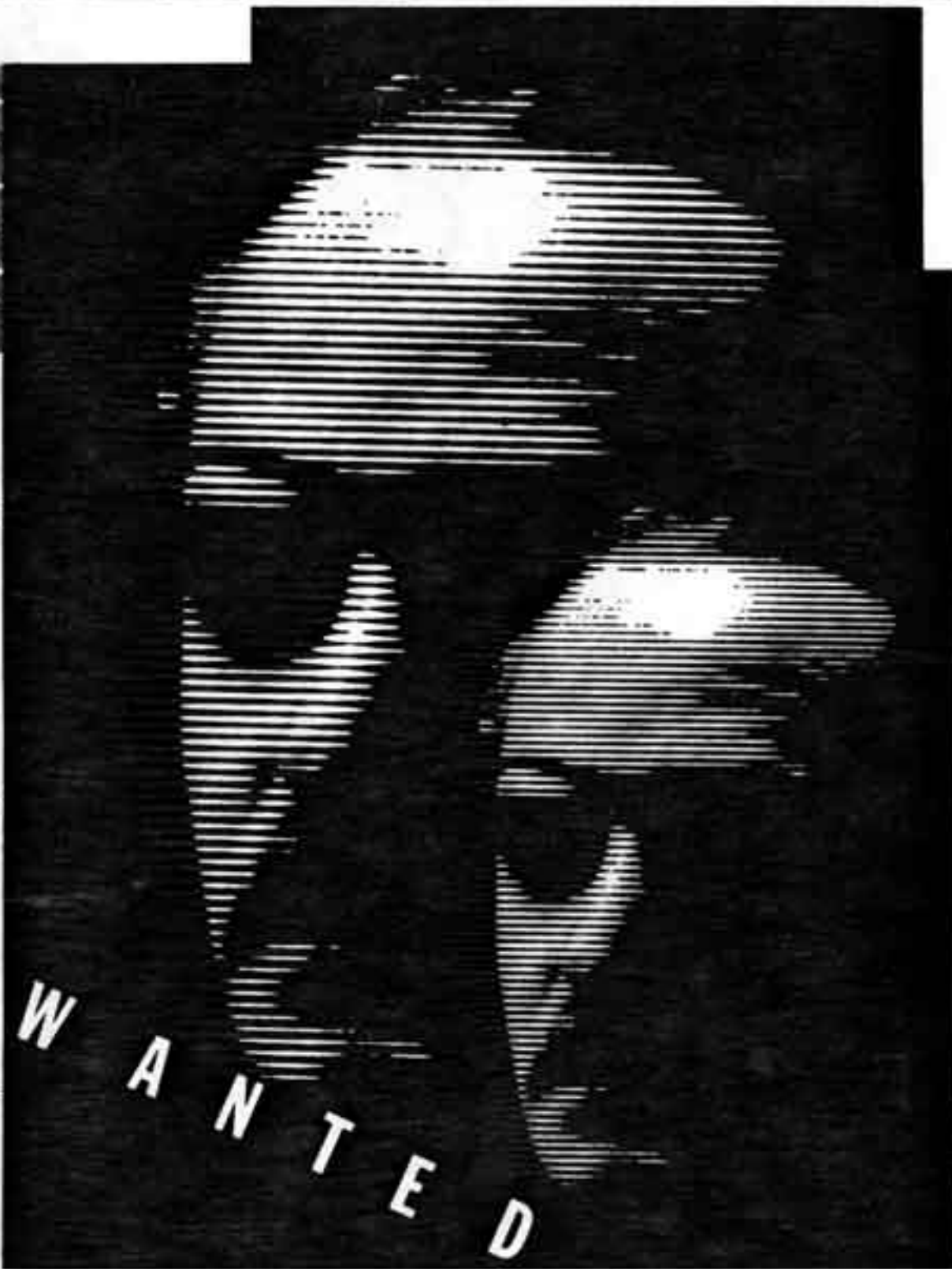
Why Some Leopards Changed Their Spots ●●

Camouflage works reasonably well for hiding as long as nothing moves. A shift in shadows or a change in perspective, however, is a "dead" giveaway to the sharp-toothed who have developed, over hungry millennia in the forest, sharp-eyed stereoptic vision. The spot-less white snow leopard, invisible against Tibetan drifts while stationary, becomes instantly evident when it moves. This principle of movement enhancing visibility has been used in a remarkable new manner by artists of the **protoArt group** in the medium of broadcast television.

Art After Art ●

The older and more formalized a method of visual aesthetics is the more difficult it becomes to make significant discoveries. From the history-before-history artists and the artists-before-artists have presented their visual perceptual insights in the static forms of painting and sculpture. Dynamic art forms were reserved for the narratives of plays, films, and now, television. Non-paradoxically, the proto-Art group has discovered broadcast television can be used as a medium which does not acknowledge these customary boundaries of static and dynamic.

Continued



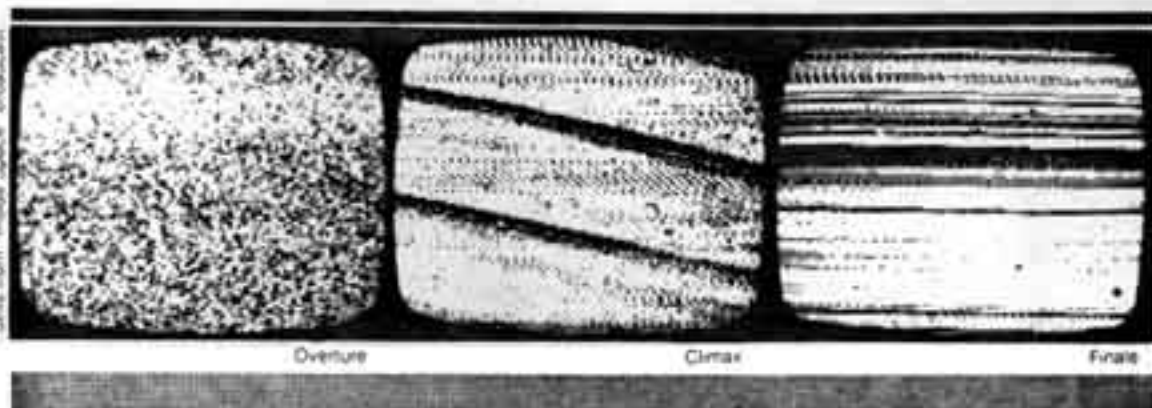
For Broadcast Piracy;
leader of the protoArt
group ●

PIRATE ARTIST!

TELEPRIVATEER!

AIR CORSAIR!

Slices from Inside Space broadcast



Pirates of the Waves ●

Illegal television broadcasting from clandestine transmitters has just become possible with the advent of satellite-relaying. Commercial video satellites passively relay any signal directed to them at the proper frequencies if it is timed to interleave with normal signals. The satellites have no ability to pinpoint the source of signals. Consequently, with relatively simple off-the-shelf equipment and an informant in a commercial satellite facility for "time-slice" guidance, a pirate station capable of continental TV transmission can be assembled and concealed in a small van. ProtoArt has done just that.

Sno-Mo-Shun ●

Choosing to ignore the distinction between borrowed experience and sensuous value, protoArt has focused its Art and its philosophy on the non-relational and all-pervasive "visual noise" between legally broadcasting channels called "snow." These artists consider the moving darks and lights of "snow" as a primordial prose: meaningless, and at the same time containing all meanings. ProtoArt transforms snow's anti-pattern into Art with a carefully timed and orchestrated series of modifying signals "narrow-cast" towards the nearest relay satellite. These signals subtly control and steer the thousand electronic flakes of snow into poetic new constructs which are both, and neither, static and/or dynamic.

Inside Space, Inside ●

Intended as an interweaving of visible energies drawing the viewer into a world intrinsically expressive, infinite yet definite, "Inside Space" achieves this with a unique and compelling psychological power. Viewing protoArt's composition of furiously dynamic "snow" elements over a period of several minutes, a symphonic multi-message becomes clear. "Inside Space" communicates command, guidance, exhortation, and warning... This viewer felt drawn, entranced into the composed electronic meta-chaos of protoArt's Art and was reminded of the Renaissance view that "there is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness".

Painting and Sculpture ●

There are still some critics who confuse philosophy with aesthetics. Moral recipes are substituted for aesthetic judgment... It would be easy to do this with "Inside Space" since it is a new image in a new space, 'cooked' a new way. Words however, cannot duplicate the expressiveness of this imagery. This expressiveness is identical to the painters'/sculptors private/public experience. Emotional turmoil and internal episodes are fused into an experience communicated as a universal. That is "Inside Space". Discount the glamour of satellites and pirate artists and view "Inside Space" as an Art-work on your own set. You will see an intimate and energetic conveying of Art now, and as it has always been.

The Darkened Eye ●

The premier work of these pirate-artists, "Inside Space", can be observed each Tuesday and Sunday night, for the next two months, between 9 and 9:30 P.M. They broadcast on frequencies which can be received by tuning your set to the highest numbered UHF channel not used legally. To make the composition visible and three dimensional, the "snow" pattern must be viewed by both eyes, through dark glasses, with one lens removed. "essential, this method of viewing utilizes the well-known 'Pulfrich effect' to complete the patterning.

There are channels between channels in all television transmission. Signifying to most "blanks" to be traversed from one broadcast to the next, these moving visual incoherencies have been unilaterally seized (without federal permission) by the protoArt group.



Viewers using one lens of dark glasses to see "Inside Space" three dimensionally

Exhibits

Through Aug. 25

Computer Works: Sequential Images (Washington, DC)

Expressive computer art by Ylem member Nancy Jackson Freeman. **Media Gallery, Washington Project for the Arts, 400 7th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004; 202-347-4813.**

Through Sept. 2

6th Annual Exhibition

Competition includes Ylem artists Eleanor Kent and Barbara T. Myman. **Berkeley Art Center, 1275 Walnut Street, Berkeley CA, 415-644-6893.**

Sept. 1-Oct. 12

Electronic Montages (San Diego)

This is the first exhibit of a new gallery for computer artists, another venture of Ylem member Michael Gosney, who started the well-produced computer graphics magazine, *Verbum*, four years ago. Features works by Michael Johnson depicting Southern California Culture. By computer he merges photos he has taken with print media images and found objects, modified with paint software. **Verbum Gallery, 670 7th Ave, 2nd. fl., San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 233-9977.**

Through Sept. 15, 1990.

Brady, McNeel & Vander Meer

Discarded Pallets — which constitute one of the largest uses of wood in the United States — are the basic materials used by Brady. Brady creates works that address her obsessions with order/chaos, structure/debris. Vander Meer creates metal armatures in which or over which she stretches nylon materials, creating shapes that resemble natural morphology like membranes. McNeel's works such as *Silo* suggest the physical residue that remain from obsolescent technologies. **San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, 155 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. (415) 554-9682.**

Through Sept. 29.

Donna Cox & Daria (Portland, OR)

Artworks by Donna Cox and Daria S. Harvey Barclay. **University of Oregon Continuation Center, 720 SW Second Portland, OR.; (503) 725-3055.**

Opportunities

Oct. 23-Dec 4.

Neon Designs & Techniques

Museum of Neon Art presents a comprehensive introductory course taught by Lili Lakich. Fabricate your own electric ideal \$350. Info: **MONA, 704 Traction Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90013. (213) 617-0274.**

November 3, 4 and 10, 11

15th Annual S.F. Open Studios

For the artist, Open Studios offers an exhibition opportunity not duplicated by any other program. Non-juried, non-censored, and open to all. The event is organized with a catalog and map. A directory exhibition at **SOMAR Gallery, 934 Brannan St., San Francisco**, will feature examples of participating artists' works and will be Open to the Public throughout the month of November. Info: **Director Jeff Nathanson at (415) 861-9838.**

F.E.A.S.T.

Musik and Electronic Sound Makers

Planning for 1992 San Francisco Area Festival of Electronic Sound, Arts and Technology (FEAST) in October and November of that year has begun.

Allen Strange of San Jose State University Music Dept. is mounting a bid to hold the 1992 International Computer Music Conference at San Jose State University in early October 1992.

ISAST and YLEM are holding coordinating meetings for a Festival of Sound Arts starting with the International Computer Music Conference and ending with American Music Week in November 1992. Any interested organizations could hold events during this period, with publicity and promotion being provided centrally. Participating organizations would be responsible for their own funding. The Sound Arts Festival would include all artforms which incorporate elements of sound or music including music, visual music, sound poetry, sound sculpture, sound installations, multi-media, intermedia performance, interactive works, nature sound recording, etc. There is also the possibility of connection with the Third International Symposium on the Electronic Arts to be held in 1992 in Australia. The organizers of TISEA, the Australian Network for Art Technology, are considering an Art and Technology Festival with links to Pacific Rim locations.

Organizations and individuals interested in being kept informed or being involved, for instance in setting up linked events, should send email to isast@garnet.berkeley.edu with their postal address. Planning meetings will be held preceding the bi-monthly YLEM (artists using science and technology) forum held at the San Francisco Exploratorium. Plans and

reports will be published in the ISAST *Leonardo Journal*, *Finaart Forum*, and the *Ylem Newsletter*. **Roger Malina, Chairman, ISAST; Beverly Reiser, President, YLEM. Box 75, 1442 A Walnut, Berkeley, CA 94709, USA. Fax (415) 841-6311 Email: FAST@UCSGARNE, isast@garnet.berkeley.edu.**

Deadline Jan. 1st, 1991

Second Issue on Holography

Leonardo Journal announces the publication of a second issue on holography. It will be edited by Ylem member Nancy Gorglione. She invites holographers and artists, curators, educators, administrators, collectors, producers and merchants to submit. The second issue on holography will be composed of diverse authors' texts with illustrations. Texts can range in length from 500 words (approximately one page) to 5000 words. An appendix containing explanations of holography, including technical information, graphs of set-ups, chemistry and a glossary will be included. *Leonardo* is collected by hundreds of libraries worldwide. Copies of the issue and off-prints will be available to authors. "Information and Guidelines" can be obtained by writing "Holography Issue," *Leonardo*, 2030 Addison St. #400, Berkeley, California 94704 or by calling Nancy Gorglione (707) 823- 7171, FAX (707) 823- 8073.

Attention All Amiga Users!!

In the early 1940s a group of Surrealist painters were stranded in the port of Marseille waiting for an American country to adopt them. Since they were penniless and had no place to go except the cafes, they invented an art game that used discarded magazines and was passed from hand to hand. They called it *Exquisite Corpse*.

Ylem's President, Bev Reiser, would like to do a 1990's version of *Exquisite Corpse*. Basically *Exquisite Corpse* is an additive picture, with each artist adding a component adjacent to the previous one. The only constraint is that only a portion of the previous component is visible to the current artist. In today's parlance this would be an "info slice." Of course, with the Amiga computer we'll be able to add a sound component and animated brushes, etc. Send her a postcard or call her and she'll put you on the list for the First! Ever! YLEM computer graphics *Exquisite Corpse*. We'll pass the pictures around on disk, and assuming there's a hearty response (not to mention an exquisite one) she'll arrange for a show or publication in some form at the end. Contact: **Beverly Reiser, 6979 Exeter Dr. Oakland, CA 94611; (415) 482- 2483.**

Helping Artists to Cope

by Michael Bell

Michael Bell is an Ylem member who knows the art world both as an artist and as a curator. Among other distinctions, he once served on the San Francisco Arts Commission. Among his interests are outrageous surrealism and "outsider" art. Several Ylem members use Visual Art Access, a service he and Steven Weiss started that teaches the artist how to be more professional and make the best use of time spent on marketing.

"Many people want to know how Steve and I started Visual Art Access, and to understand how it differs from other opportunities an artist ought to consider.

"Essentially this program is the result of two major influences: a) the training we received in 25+ years of museum and art non-profit work, and b) the frustration we both experienced in efforts to assist living artists under those systems. There had to be a better way to learn about contemporary art, to get pertinent information to artists in a timely manner, and to have some kind of responsible

follow-up over time. In late 1986 I got the idea to start a little company that would attempt to do the above services at affordable cost.

"As things were before then, I was widely known to have a "open door" to any artist regardless of standard criteria. At best I got an hour with an artist per year, hardly enough to learn a name much less anything about the work itself! I sat there at my official desk, wearing my official ties and suits, having official length hair and very expensive shoes, but having to prove not one single thing about myself to those who did find courage to make contact. On top of that, the incredibly stifling magnitude of just being part of a large bureaucracy was in itself and insurmountable barrier. It made no sense that there should be so much frustration among artists when there was so much real opportunity out there. Finally I got it through my thick skull that perhaps there were actually some things that could and must be

done to help artists set proper standards and have a management system they could possess and practise with regularity and precision. Yet, I had/have no desire to be a part of any other system that encourages dependence and supports (no matter how "innocently") mechanisms of exploitation.

"In 1988 I asked Steve Weiss to join me in the capacity of Technician. We compliment each other very well. He is very calm and slow, while I am very intense and frantic. Our job is to make your life better, and to do this with realistic, appropriate, lasting, state-of-the-art, essential, pragmatic, provable finesse. We are determined to keep the costs of this program at the absolute lowest possible level, and to give back far more (whether it is immediately clear or not) in return. It is an open system to any who think they can handle it, and it does yield much more than any other program or service we are aware of to date."

Member News

The videotape, *Ylem: Artists Using Science and Technology*, will soon be shown in the Rose City New Video Festival in Portland, OR. (To order your copy of this video, see back page).

Sonya Rapoport has exhibited recently in two crafts museums in San Francisco, and at the Anacorage Museum of History and Art.

Trudy Myrth Reagan's article, "An Artist Explores the Concept of Levels in Matter," appears in the most recent issue of *Leonardo*, Vol. 23 #1, 1990.

First prize in the "Beauty of Physics" photo competition went to Clifford A. Pickover, an expert on natural patterns and computing, for his computer-generated seashell and leaf pattern. It also appeared on the July/August 1990 cover for *CERN Courier International Journal of High Energy Physics*.

The works of Diane Fenster, and perhaps other members, will be included in the Pacific Northwest Computer Graphics Art & Design Show.

California Artist/Designer Mike Mosher

returns to his hometown Ann Arbor for a slide talk about its influence on his work. His talk will tie together his community murals and the Macintosh, comics and content (he did a cartoon biography of Orwell), traditional easel painting and currents he sees in his — and Ann Arbor's — art world that flow into new electronic forms like hypermedia and virtual realities.

A letter from Frank Dietrich in an Ylem member who has moved to Cologne, Germany:

"A few weeks ago we visited Hungary and got a good insight into the dramatic change in Eastern Europe. People there are experiencing a burst of creativity and the joy to live. They are also facing uncertain economical times with inflation being rampant and social security not able to keep up.

"I did see a very different Berlin compared to the one I left 10 years ago. Today, the fringes cut by the wall are becoming the center of the city again. Here, an interesting ethnographic mixture between Germans, Turks, Poles and the alternative subculture occasionally comes to a boil. For the first time I could go to the suburbs replete with

lakes and woods. Most certainly Berlin will play a major role in the next decade and it will be interesting to watch the socio-cultural dynamics as they unfold.

"A few words on the art scene here: Cologne has many galleries and museums, and today is considered an important center of contemporary art in Europe. In our neighborhood two large scale projects are in the first startup phase; Media Park is a commercial set of brand new buildings on a former railway station and then there is the first Media University in Germany. Its objective are to cover all aspects of media, their aesthetics, their economics, technology, etc. Somehow I will be involved, either through Silicon Graphics or as a personal hobby.

"One other project caught my attention. It is called sculpture valley. It has been initiated by a well known sculptor who purchased a couple of gently sloped acres. He then invited friends and peers to specifically create pieces for this natural environment. Interestingly enough he is now working with a holographer to place a hologram next to the eating cows. To walk the fields and to discover the art is fun and very stimulating."

Postmodern Currents: Art and Artists in the Age of Electronic Media

by Margot Lovejoy

(Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press
1989 - now \$24.95 paperback)

Have you wondered who's who in this zoo of media-mediated art? If you are a high-tech artist, have you delighted in yet worried about the uniqueness of your works and the ease of copying them? Do artist friends scorn you for "letting an unfeeling machine do your work?" Do curators ignore you? If the unique art object is turning into digits and disappearing into a soup of video signals, why are you bothering to do it?

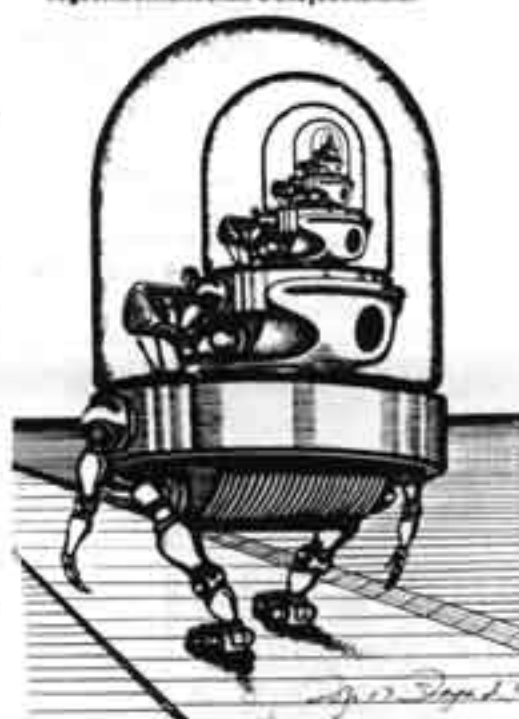
Margot Lovejoy, art professor at the State University of New York at Purchase, not only discusses all of the above in *Postmodern Currents* but shows that most of the issues are as old as the invention of the camera in 1835. Artists and curators have been slandering photographs as being "too easy, too mechanical, too copiable and too close to commercial art" ever since. Lovejoy, herself a high-tech artist, has a good feel for where technology is taking us, and why artists need to be engaged in the currents of the period they find themselves in. This includes grasping the new tools and finding out what their power implies. What does it mean to have all of art history on videodisk? To be able to combine any image with any other? It certainly puts each work of the past into an entirely new context.

Apparently, this is the essence of the new game called "deconstructionism."

Artists help society to keep its balance. She quotes the Korean video pioneer, Nam June Paik: "Our life is half natural and half technological. Half and half is good. You cannot deny that high-tech is progress. Yet if you make only high-tech you make war. So we must have a strong human element to keep modesty and natural life."

Art Com

Art Com offers a free catalog of artist videos, books, and software that can be ordered by mail, phone, FAX or e-mail. For instance: *Postmodern Currents* (see review), \$24.95 pbk book; *State of the Art of Computer Animation* (70 minutes, 30 artists) VHS video \$21.95; and videos about Mark Pauline's Survival Research Labs, *A Bitter Message of Hopeless Grief*, \$21.95; and *Menacing Machine Mayhem*, \$40.00. Info: Art Com, PO Box 193123 Rincon, San Francisco, CA 94119; (415) 431-7524; FAX (415) 431-7841; three e-mail addresses: artcomtv@well.sf.ca.us artcomtv%well.sf.ca.us@cunyvsn.bitnet cogsci@wellartcomtv@ucbjade.bitnet



"I think, therefore I amble"
pen and ink by Roger Shepard

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Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility reports: "Bulletin board operator Rich Andrews, who discovered that an AT&T document had been posted on his system and who reported this back to AT&T officials, was rewarded by having his entire operation shut down. In March, Secret Service agents confiscated computers and other equipment from Steve Jackson Games, a small Texas company. Four months later, there are still no charges — nothing to justify the raid which has forced Jackson to lay off half his employees and nearly close down his business." Info: *CPSR*, P.O. Box 717, Palo Alto, CA 94302.

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**Ylem Newsletter, 967 Moreno Ave.
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Also, please continue to send notices of events, needs, opportunities, exhibitions and talks.



computer art by Trudy Myrrh Reagan

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**September
Newsletter**

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